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MR TUPPER'S WORK AS A POET.*

We have read the following article several times and are in doubt whether the author means to be serious or ironical.

All the greater poets have formed the taste which they themselves satisfy. Every one has remarked the struggle through which Woodsworth had to pass before, in the evening of his days, he found a generation in whom he had instilled a thirst for the "lonely rapture of lonely minds," and full of gratitude for the clear draughts of melody with which he slaked the thirst. Even Mr. Tennyson had to fight his way over minds that rebelled against the rich double blossoms and heavy hyacinth-like odors of a style so saturated with sentiment, till they learned to long for the beauty they had at first despised. The same may be said with even more obvious truth of the rugged humor and keen imaginative fidelity of Mr. Browning's muse And so we cannot wonder that it is comparatively late in his career before Martin Farquhar Tupper has wrung for himself the vacant throne waiting for him among the immortals, and after a long and glorious term of popularity among those who know when their hearts are touched without being able to justify their taste to the intellect, has been adopted by the suffrage of mankind and the final decree of publishers into the same rank with Woodsworth, Tennyson, and Browning. Mr. Tupper is quite conscious that the critical moment of his fame has at length arrived. In a preface marked by his usual sententious wisdom, he explains why he asked the admission which had not been denied him to this brotherhood of poets:

"It has occurred to me to request the famous poetical Sosii of Dover street to authorize a selection from my various Rhymes and Rythms in Moxon's miniature series, and ware as needs must be by this time) that I have readers and friends in many nooks and corners of our habitable lobe, I have done my best to fill this niche, and to answer my publisher's purpose as well as my own, by grouping, as a selection, not alone several such poems as the world has been kind enough heretofore to mint-mark with approbation, but also some that have been found fault with, and others that are quite new A man who has run the gauntlet of so-called criticism fearlessly and successfully for well-nigh thirty years, is not at this hour careful to catch vain praises, or to escape from as vain censures. Let us all retain our opinions peaceably; and if anyone will honestly judge an author, let him first read his works; the very last thing thought of by certain professional critics. Englishmen, however, of every class, are in the main, lovers of fair play; especially when all that is asked of them is an open field and no favor. To such I commend this beautifully printed volume as a mere book specimen worthy of the Elzivirs.

MARTIN F. TUPPER.

"ALBURY, *December*, 1865."

A man of less accurate mind would have thought it needless to point out that his popularity extends only to the *habitable* globe, but it is one of the distinctions which has endeared Mr. Tupper to his many admirers that he brings out into clear view those universal and half-unconscious assumptions of human thought, the indisputable character of which is recognized as soon as they are put down in his massive and lucid English before the readers.

The public will hail with satisfaction the award which assigns Mr. Tupper his place beside the great poets of our generation, and we cannot doubt that the noble company of the great poets who strove in vain for that recognition which Mr. Tupper has gloriously achieved, will rise up to ratify the judgment:

"The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton
Rose pale, his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought
And as he fell, and loved,
Sublimely mild, a spirit without spot
Arose: and Lucan by his death approved:
Oblivion as they rose shrunk like a thing reproved.

"And many more whose names on earth are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose robed in dazzling immortality.
'Thou art become as one of us,' they cry;
It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid a heaven of song.
Assume thy winged throne, thou Vesper of our throng.'"

If such a winged throne could be kept for Keats, with his rich and sensuous but unhuman imaginings, how much larger and steadier a seat must be reserved for the graceful, intellectual embonpoint, the large full-bottomed humanity of Tupper's cheery genius. Oblivion never "shrank like a thing reproved" as it shrinks beneath the accents we have already quoted of our own domestic poet, no less sublimely mild" than Sidney's. Tupper indeed has not yet left us, and long may his throne swink kingless in unascended majesty, if that soft vesper light is to set for us before it rises for them. But this is at least the moment which prefigures his reception among the immortals, and the fitting time therefore to say a word of his extraordinary powers.

As we began by remarking, Tupper has formed the taste which he satisfies. To one not familiar with Tupper there is a certain disappointment at first, such as many complained of in reading, for instance, Wordsworth's lines written near Tintern Abbey, in the meditative egotism which may be observed in him no less than in Wordsworth. The disciples of Wordsworth are reconciled to this by the necessarily prophetic character of those who bring new lessons to mankind. As a thoughtful critic wrote—"It came to pass in those days that William Wordsworth went up into the hills." And that no doubt suggested the true character of Wordsworth's poetic mission.

With Mr. Tupper the explanation is somewhat different. He, too, as he tells us, "magnifies his office," but the egotism essential to him is not a mere consequence of the simplest way of reporting the thoughts which came to the writer, as in Wordsworth's case, for he is not so much the mere canal of his thoughts, the aqueduct by which they reach us, as the very object and substance of most of his finest thoughts, the vision itself, no less than the stage on which the vision appears. This is the first stumbling-block to his disciples. But then, when they come to see what there is in that genial personality, that it is a sort of glorified Anglo-Saxon essence which frankly unveils itself at the mere appearance of egotism, the apparent stumbling-block becomes a step to admiration. Take, for instance, the following gay and delicate verses on Mr. Tupper's "beautiful brain," seeming to paint the first singing, as it were, of the kettle of genius before the evaporation of prose into verse begins—lines which, with a significant meaning, which we shall presently understand, Mr. Tupper has named "Sloth."

SLOTH.

"'A little more sleep, a little more slumber,
A little more folding the hands to sleep,'
For quick-footed dreams, without order or number,
Over my mind are beginning to creep,
Rare is the happiness thus to be raptured
By your wild whispers, my fanciful train,
And like a linnet, be carelessly captured
In the soft net of my beautiful brain.

"Touch not these curtains! your hand will be tearing
Delicate tissues of thoughts and of things;
Call me not!—your cruel voice will be scaring
Flocks of young visions on gossamer wings:
Leave me, O leave me! for in your rude presence
Nothing of all my bright world can remain,—
Thou art a blight to this garden of pleasance,
Thou art a blot on my beautiful brain!

"Cease your dull lecture on cares and employment,
Let me forget awhile trouble and strife,
Leave me to peace—let me husband enjoyment,
This is the heart and the marrow of life!
For to my feeling the choicest of pleasures
Is to lie thus, without peril or pain,
Lazily listening the musical measures
Of the sweet voice in my musical brain!

"Hush,—for the halo of calmness is spreading
Over my spirit as mild as a dove;

* Moxon's Miniature Poets. A selection from the works of Martin Farquhar Tupper, M.A., D.C.L., F.R.S.

Hush! for the angel of comfort is shedding
Over my body his vial of love;
Hush,—for new slumbers are over me stealing,
Thus would I court them again and again,
Hush,—for my heart is intoxicate, reeling
In the swift waltz of my beautiful brain!"

The seeming egotism of this poem, attributing, as it appears to do, beauty of a high order even to the whitey-brown nerve-tissue of Mr. Tupper's brain itself, vanishes as soon as its extraordinary subtlety and boldness of conception are fully perceived. Mr. Tupper, finding any disturbing agency, whether of domestic servant or of that "hind" elsewhere more than once referred to by him, or, indeed, of any other interrupting influence, a blot on the intrinsic beauty of the brain in the network of which he is a struggling captive,—Mr. Tupper, half-lulled again by the "sweet vision" in that beautiful brain,—finally, Mr. Tupper's *heart* reeling "in the swift waltz" of his "beautiful brain,"—are all, especially the last, metaphors so bold that the earnest student of his poetry is driven to look beneath the surface. And there he sees at once that the poet sees really in himself the genius of Englan,—that he sees that it is the peculiar danger of England to be too much ruled by her intellectual class, to be caught, in short, "in the soft net of her beautiful brain,"—that the agency which is most unpleasantly awakening her, and preventing her from giving herself up to that influence, is the true "blot on her beautiful brain," namely, the laboring-class, giving rise no doubt to the condition-of-England question,—that in spite of this awakening blot on the brain the voice of the intellectual syren is still in danger of prevailing—nay, that finally, the very heart of England is yielding to the intoxication, and whirling madly about in the swift waltz of the intellectual thoughts which can neither sober it nor govern themselves. And now we see why he has named the lines "Sloth." It is moral sloth which prevents the will and heart of England from asserting themselves against the toils laid for them by the morbidly active brain.

Mr. Tupper is often as impressive as this, but not often quite so subtle. You must study him indeed, like all great poets, to grasp his full greatness, but usually his apparent drift and his real drift are one and the same. And, as in this poem, he himself almost always stands, and usually without any sort of disguise, for the English character. Take, for instance, the grand lines on "Energy," beginning:

"Indomitable merit!
Of the stout old Saxon mind,
That makes a man inherit
The glories of his kind—
That scatters all around him
Until he stands sublime,
With nothing to confound him,
The conqueror of Time."

The whole piece is unfortunately too long for quotation, but we must show how simply and powerfully, after this introduction to show us that he is really speaking of the English national mind, he glides into his usual identifications of that mind with his own representative personality. He speaks of the manifest destiny which urges on his own "energies ethereal," but he is only the microcosm in which we see the delineation of the macrocosm indicated at the commencement of the poem:

Unflinching and unfearing,
The [illegible]
And in grim courage wreaking
The hunger I have won!
Let Circumstance oppose me,
I beat it to my will;
And if the flesh o'erflows me,
I dive and stem it still.—
No hindering dull material
Shall conquer or control
My energies ethereal—
My gladiator soul!

I will contrive occasion,
Not tamely bade my time;
No Capture, but Creation
Shall make my sport sublime!
Let lower spirits linger
For sign by beck or nod.
I always see the finger
Of an onward-urging God!"

How fine is that contrast:—

"My energies ethereal,
My gladiator soul."

An "etherial gladiator,"—that is what Mr. Tupper would make out of the strong Anglo-Saxon stuff of which his countrymen are made. This is what Mr. Tupper has already made out of herself.

But it is not only in teaching us to see really broad and comprehensive thoughts in the apparent egotism of his reflections that Mr. Tupper has educated the taste which he gratifies. As Wordsworth educated us to appreciate truly the (almost naked) simplicity which he always observed, so Tupper has educated us to appreciate truly a simplicity of another kind,—a cooing, domestical simplicity, almost *dovey* in its sweetness and innocence, which when closely associated with the strong Anglo-Saxon feelings we have described,—the "gladiator-soul" element of Mr. Tupper's poetry,—makes a very rare combination indeed. Take, for example, the second stanza in the poem called "*Fons Parnassi*," or "Solace of Song":—

"Ah! thou fairy fount of sweetness,
Well I wot how dear though art
In thy purity and meetness
To my hot and thirsty heart,
When, with sympathetic fleetness,
I have raced from thought to thought,
And, arrayed in maiden neatness,
By her natural taste well taught,
Thy young Naiad, thy Pieria,
My melodious Egeria,
Winsomely finds out my fancies
Frank as Sappho, as unsought—
And with innocent wife-like glances
Close beside my spirit dances,
As a sister Ariel ought—
Tripping at her wanton will,
With unpremeditated skill,
Like a gushing mountain rill,
Or a bright Bacchante, reading
Through the flights of thought and feeling,
Half concealing, half revealing
Whatsoe'er of spirit's fire,
Beauty kindling with desire,
Can be caught in Word's attire;
Evoe! Fons Parnassi,
Fons ebrie Parnassi."

The unchastened mind, as yet uncultivated by Mr. Tupper's influence, will revolt against this, as the enemies of Wordsworth who composed the parody about "naughty Nancy Lake" rebelled against his simplicity. But the dove of Mr. Tupper's muse will overcome them at last, and make them see the exquisite taste and feeling of "an innocent wife-like" Egeria—how completely it rids us of any of the ambiguous feelings excited by the story of Numa and Egeria,—an Egeria, too, who does not dance in Mr. Tupper's presence at all without having her sister with her. Even so, we may perhaps a little regret some of the last line. We don't think "an innocent wife-like" Egeria should have been at all like a Bacchante, even a Bacchante in "Word's attire," though we have no doubt that it is a very respectable attire. We don't think the allusion unite in Mr. Tupper's ordinary tone. Still the innocent sweetness of the general conception is perhaps even enhanced by the slip.

The same exquisite purity of feeling shows itself in Mr. Tupper's love of crystals and all symbols of purity. The thoughts shooting through his brain when "the calm chaos-brooding dove" of Silence is present with him he likens to crystals, in spite of the partial painfulness of the suggestion of crystals dancing about in the soft net of a "beautiful brain."

SILENCE.

"Dear Nurse of Thought, calm chaos-brooding dove,
Thee, Silence, well I love:
Mother of Fancy, friend and sister mine,
Silence, my heart is thine.

Rarer than Eloquence, and sweeter far
Thy dulcet pauses are;
Stronger than Music, charm she ne'er so well,
Is, Silence, thy soft spell.

The rushing crystals throb about my brain,
And thrill, and shoot again,—
Their teeming imagery crowds my sphere,
If silence be but here."

There is, no doubt, a certain intentional incongruity between the dove-like character of Silence and her crystalizing *modus operandi* on the brain. The one is soft purity, the other hard purity; and Mr. Tupper means to teach us by the contrast how really consistent is the soft cooing of domestic peace with the hard and luminous brilliance of poetic conception. He is very happy in conveying moral lessons by these metaphors. In an address to the flying year he says:—

RHEU! FUGACES.

"The flying years! the flying years!
How rapidly they wing away—
With all their convey'd hopes and fears,
A mingled flock of grave and gay,"

—where every one will feel at once the originality and beauty of the phrase "coveyd hopes and fears." It transports you immediately to the partridge-field, you hear the whirr of the startled brood as, like hopes and fears, they rise from their nest in the bosom of earth, and the report of the gun which brings down one and leaves the others—a living type of the apparently harsh and capricious selections of destiny. Yet does not the sportsman select the fattest partridge for his aim, just as destiny so often destroys the richest, best-fed hopes, and leaves the lean ones uninjured?

But we must conclude arbitrarily, or we should never conclude at all; and as Tupper finely says—a truth which, like all his truths, has grown upon us more and more the more deeply we study his works—

"All created yearnings tend
In a rapid ever stronger
To that cataract, The End."

That we should feel such a creature-yearning at all while reading Mr. Tupper is the strongest proof we could bring of the rare generalising power which belongs to his wise, genial, and innocent poetic nature.

(*For the Saturday Press.*)

LOGOI:

PROPHETIC MYSTERIES.

BY THE LITTLE PROPHET.

[PART SECOND.]

XII.

OF THE LAND OF THE GOLDEN CALF.

1. Bufo, Helite, Selenite!
2. And the changes thereof.
3. For the curse of Achan hath not visited them, nor the iniquity of Kuneceph.
4. Do not the rocks thereof strive and labor, and is not the sweat of their toiling pure gold, even gold of many carats fineness?
5. Doth not the sweet herb, the cabbage, hate the Cyclamen, so that both do wither in contact.
6. Doth not the ranunculus love the water-lily, and the rue the fig?
7. Such is the love of vain mortals for gold, fine gold of many carats fineness, (but not that which is inscribed upon paper, and floweth out of the ink-horn without check or hindrance.)
8. So even the Apites cannot stay man's hand when he searcheth for it, nor can prior claims dispossess him.
9. He goeth in to the desert and the wilderness, and the rocky mountain, and toileth without ceasing giving his own sweat for the sweat of the rocks which is gold.
10. So it cometh to pass he hath seized upon the land of the Golden Calf, and surveyed it, and portioned it off into fragments, so that a piece of that land not wider than the periphery of a domestic creature when evil disposed boys do seize it by the extremity and sling it around—such a piece doth sell for many thousand shekels of silver, and commonly hath many claimants prompt to do battle for the possession of it.
11. Now as the Little Prophet journeyed, after journeying many days, he came to the land of the Golden Calf.
12. And entered into a city therein, which is called the city of the Virgin, because the inhabitants thereof have not seen a woman, within all the walls of that great city.
13. So that the peace and quietude of it hath no disturbance.
14. For the men of that city, though a heady set, and prone to anger, speak not a word even when they quarrel, but deal blows and take lives in silence and contentedness.
15. Now when the Little Prophet came to that city, he stood still at a certain place, and began to survey its wonders.
16. And behold, even as he stood, there came to him a man of fierce aspect and forbidding countenance, armed and equipped with shield and spear and bow and quiver and divers other weapons.
17. Who came towards him presently, and accosted him savagely in the language of that place, saying,
18. Stranger, that air's my claim you're a standin' on, and ef you want to jump my claim you've got to jump me first, that's all!
19. And when the Little Prophet, perplexed, stood doubtful and dismayed, peering through his eye-glasses, the man upraised his spear, and would have transfixed him.
20. But behold, another man, even the comrade of this one, coming up, did interpose, saying:
21. Stay thy hand, oh comrade, for the stranger hath the look of one wise in the matter of minerals, and per adventure may be of service to our behoof.
22. And the Little Prophet answered, and said, Yea verily, I know the metals and minerals of the earth.—For he was sore afraid.
23. And they did covenant with him to spare his life and recompense him, if he would write a Prospectus for them.
24. So the Little Prophet took pen and ink, and wrote.

XIII.

THE PROSPECTUS.

1. To all men, gold-greedy; greeting:
2. Know ye that we have possession of the Stormcork Lead, from the regions of the Birds of the Air unto the inmost depths of bowels of the Earth.
3. In breadth, broader than the platitudes of a Thanksgiving Sermon.
4. In thickness, thick as the numbskull of chivalry moriturus.
5. In richness: of gold one hundred parts; of silver, sixty parts; of kerosene, pure, ninety parts; of refuse, six parts; of seltzer-water, twenty parts; two hundred and seventy-six parts.
6. Assaying ninety hundredweight of metal to the ton.
7. Probable contents: seven hundred million cubic miles.
8. Probable yield: five hundred thousand sheckels of silver to the cubic inch.
9. Cost of working: Thirty-seven and one half sheckels of silver yearly.
10. Three hundred thousand shares at ten sheckels a share, one half paid in.
11. The Great Stormcork Lead, originated by A. Boss Around.
12. (*Signed*) KLEIN SEHER GESCHOTT, *Ph. D. D. D. Geol. et. Mineral. ad Com. Stormc. Lead.*

XIV.

OF THE LAND THAT FLOWETH WITH MILK AND HONEY.

1. Now it came to pass that when the Prospectus was sent abroad, and the owners thereof had enriched themselves, even to rivalry with the princes of the earth, and far beyond the richness of the Kings of the Earth to the west-ward, a certain murmur arose among the inhabitants of the city of the Virgin.
2. And they said, lo, we have been deceived, and vilely entreated—in the language of that people taken in and done for.
3. So they rose up against the Little Prophet in anger, and broke his spectacles, and applied their feet to the nethermost part of him, and stoned him, and would have put him to death;
4. But he fled hastily by night, and went up out of that city forever.
5. And after many days, he came to a land flowing with milk and honey, which is called in the dialect of that place Nephi-Zarahemla, which signifieth the Land of the Golden Seal.
6. But the world's people do call it the Land of the Mystery of Many women.
7. And the city's name is Coriantumr, meaning thereby Lot's wife; but the world's people do say it meaneth, lots of wives.
8. And the ruler's name thereof is called Brobrighamy which signifieth in our dialect, One Hundred and Fifty, for so many wives hath this happy ruler, with oxen and children as many as the sands of the sea-shore.
9. So when the Little Prophet saw this land flowing with milk and honey, and was pleased with it, the spirit entered into him, and he went to the theatre, and standing up, prophesied:
10. Behold this land that floweth with milk! yea, milk for many babes!
11. It pleaseth my sight, and doeth good to the sinews of my heart.
12. Lo! a thousand shall call one man honey!
13. And a hundred shall bear children unto him.
14. Come hither, oh ye sage-femines, for ye shall gather a harvest abundantly!
15. And you, ye makers of cradles, and you, ye singers of lullabies!
16. The fulness thereof filleth me, and my heart giveth a bound!
17. Blessed be thy Golden Seal, oh Nephi-Zarahemla!
18. Various and loud be thy sounds, oh city of Coriantumr!
19. Sweet be thy slumbers, oh Brobrighamy! and of a sweetness proportioned to their shortness!
20. Woe to the washer-woman that washeth for thee, for her elbows must needs be weary.
21. Wax to thy ears, oh chieftain of the Hundred and Fifty! for in them is a sound as of the rushing of many waters.
22. Behold! the spirit is in me, strong! am possessed!
23. Ethir, Jared, Moziah, Gazalem!
24. I speak, but I cannot interpret!
25. For it is all written in a book.
26. Oh the land of wives and of babies!
27. Lullaby! Lullaby! Lullaby! *Sic vos non vobis!* Lullaby!
28. And the cry goeth into my soul! I am possessed! transformed! Lullaby!
29. And the spirit did so oppress the Little Prophet that he fell into a trance, and was with difficulty recovered.
30. Now it came to pass, when that he was come to, the Little Prophet found himself among the women of that land.
31. And there were women before him, women behind him, women to right of him, women to left of him.
32. And they did honor him for a Prophet.
33. And they demanded to be sealed unto him, with the Golden Seal of Nephi-Zarahemla, after the fashion of the city of Coriantumr.
34. And they did sing a psalm in his honor, and in testimony of their longing, a psalm, the burden and chorus of which was:

35. We want a man—
We want a man—
We want a man
—shion in the skies!

36. And when the Little Prophet could not accommodate them, behold, he was in extreme peril of his life.

37. But Brobrighamy did rescue him, and give him in charge of certain sons of Dan, to escort thence.

38. And the sons of Dan, taking him beyond the confines of the land of Nephi-Zarahemla, did gently toss him into a pond of water, and so left him.

XV.

OF THE BORDERS OF CIVILATION.

1. Now when the Little Prophet lifted up his head, and looked forth from the pond which was a duck-pond, behold, he found himself upon the Borders of Civilation.

2. When the weazel sleepeth, and is caught at his slumbers.

3. And there the Apites, even Cash, Shoddash, Bosh, and Demogosh have power.

4. Now on the Borders of Civilation dwelt an Oracle, who marshalled armies, and wore a black satin waist-coat.

5. And the name of the Oracle was Swampoodle, and he was as a divinity to the people of Peoria.

6. And the Little Prophet sought out this Oracle, and demanded of him a sign.

7. So the Oracle, stroking his satin vestments, opened his mouth, and spake as follows:

8. Tink-tank! Tink-tank! Tink-tank!

9. Brecca coax! brecca hoax! kekki choax —squee—squee—squee!

10. Bluhr-an-ouns! bluhr-an-an-ouns! bluhr-an-nouns! erumph!

11. The signs, and the symbols, and the tokens thereof!

12. For the goggle-eyed vulture shall put his beak into the shell of the bearded one; and the old serpent shall go to a Schützen-fest and get drunk on lager; and a land-slide shall bury the tortoise; and their breaths shall be fragrant of garlic; and the song of the *claqueurs* shall be his requiem! And after that the hebiddy shall hatch cockatrice, and plum-puddings grow upon sycamore trees!

13. But the Little Prophet answered, and said, Master, how shall I know this thing, and the interpretation thereof?

14. And the Oracle said, Learn thou the Philosophy of the Double-Breasted?

15. And where can one attain to this Philosophy? asked the Little Prophet.

16. And the Oracle answered, and said: At Peoria sitteth the court of Thesmophoria under charge of sister-brother Petra Lucida Androgynus.

17. And go thou to sister-brother Petra Lucida; he-she will inculcate thee in the Philsophy of the Double-Breasted, at a charge of two sheckels of silver the lecture.

XVI.

ANOTHER PROPHET.

1. So the Little Prophet journeyed forth in search of the Philosophy of the Double-Breasted, and sister-brother Petra Lucida, the expounder thereof, and Peoria, the place of its exposition.

2. Now behold, when he had come some distance, he encountered a great throng of men and women, and one was haranging them.

3. And he did speak with his back to the crowd, yet was eloquent.

4. So the Little Prophet asked, and said, Who is the eloquent man, speaking with his back to the crowd, and saying and unsaying many things.

5. So they answered, and said: it is the great Windell Filps, the prophet with the seamy side out;

6. Who liveth by the rule of contraries, and seeth things precisely opposite from their appearance to other people.

7. Behold, he liveth in the street, and maketh his own house the thoroughfare.

8. He swalloweth the shell, and casteth away the oyster.

9. He drinketh the bottle, and replaceth the liquor upon the shelf.

10. He seeth the stars by day, and at night rejoiceth in the sunshine.

11. Black is to him as white, but all other colors grass-green.

12. He fighteth manfully against shadows, but giveth all substance the go-by.

13. He shoeth his hands, but letteth his feet go bare.

14. And maketh a merit of chillblains.

15. Sweet to him are the uses of adversity, but prosperity maketh him sick even unto death.

16. Behold, he prophesise wonderful things

17. He hath seen the glory and triumph of the new nation whereof Mr. Jay Dee was ruler.

18. And the said ruler sitting in the high places of the Kings of the Earth to the Westward.

19. He hath seen the gilt under gold, and pointeth to the mice in the heart of the cheese.

20. Smiles are the symbols of agony, and groans betoken great joy.

21. Blessed be his eyes, that can see what other eyes cannot see.

22. And blessed be his clarion voice, for it playeth musical discords!

XVII.

OF THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL.

1. Now when that other Prophet, whose name was Windall Filps, had finished his harangue, and the crowd had rewarded him, according to their wont, the Little Prophet joined him, and they two journeyed on together.

2. And after a space, the Little Prophet opened his mouth and said: I hear that thou art a Prophet and the Son of a Prophet, oh thou with the seamy side out;

3. Lo now! give me a taste of thy quality, and a sample of thy prophetic power!

4 And the Prophet whose name was Windall Filps, pointed, and said:

5. Behold the handwriting on the wall! Read thou me that, for therein is hidden wisdom, and from thence do I prophesy!

6. And the Little Prophet looked, and beheld a mystic writing upon a blank wall, in great characters; as it were, to wit:

7. S—T. 1860—X!

8. And the Little Prophet was greatly puzzled thereat, and could not interpret it, by reason of the Spirit being gone out from him.

9. So he turned to that other prophet, and said to him: Behold now, brother, I am greatly perplexed by reason of the interpretation thereof not coming into my mind, so do *thou* read it unto me, and enlighten me.

10. And the seamy-side-out prophet, whose name was Windall Filps, answered and said, Thus and so is the interpretation thereof:

11. "*S*," *Slavery*, "*T*," *will triumph*, "1860 *X*," *in* 1860 *plus ten years, or*, 1870!

12. But, hearing this interpretation, the spirit straightway entered into the Little Prophet, and he saw the thing as it was, and the inspiration of it overflowed his life, and he said, not so, oh my brother!

13. For the line reading and interpretation thereof is as follows:

14. S. T. 1860–X.

15. That is to say, in the language of the Spirits of Casks: *Stahfix!*

16. Which is, being interpreted: He that goeth to Pfaff's shall consume unknown quantities of Santa Cruz.

17. And the Sons of Temperance especially.

18. And the proof thereof is the backward reading of it, which is, a Duck, and a Drake, make a Three-water Snake!

19. And the Serpent pertaineth to Esculapius, which is health.

20. And the Drake pertaineth to bitters.

21. Now when the prophet Windall Filps heard this interpretation, he was angered, and flinging a summersault, walked away upon his hands, with his feet in the air, and left the Little Prophet to pursue his journey alone.

XVIII.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE DOUBLE-BREASTED.

1. The voice of the Little Prophet, the voice of one inculcated!

2. Cave canem! Habet fœnum in cornu!

3. Wave hawk, and look out for the locomotive!

4. I am wiser than my fathers!

5. I know things men do not dream of, and I am wise with the wisdom of the Queen Bee!

6. Magnes, imago, magia!

7. In my ears are the sound of rushing waters!

8. And I have seen a woman wear the inexpressible garment!

9. I have solved the depths of all mysteries! I know the greatest of riddles!

10. Ælia, Laelia, Crispis!

11. Neque homo, neque mulier, neque androgynis!

12. Potz donner wetter und sapperment, und maschlaffen!

13. Wisdom is on thy lips, oh sister-brother Petra Lucida Androgynus, sitting upon thy tripod in thy court of Thesmophoria in the city of Peoria!

14. Wise art thou in thy day and thy generation, and profound is thy philosophy of the Double-Breasted!

15. But neither is it given to any one to know all things, nor to see the milk in the cocoa nut, whether it be sour or sweet.

16. For the stalled ox is not a bull, nor doth the spae'd heifer yield butter.

17. Woe be to the stiff ones in their pride!

18. And woe be to those that put on the inexpressible garment and look not after the buttons thereof!

19. Now the Philosophy of the Double-Breasted, which sister-brother Petra Lucida taught me, sitting upon her-his tripod in his-her court of Thesmophoria in the city of Peoria, is as follows, to wit, namely:

20. Man is man, and woman is woman.

21. Man is not woman, but woman is man.

22. Only, more so.

23. Silence is not good.

24. Speech is the salt of the air, that stirs it, and preserves it from stagnation and rottenness.

25. Love hath many faces, but thou canst only kiss the one that is turned towards thee.

26. Woman is man, and the garb thereof is hers, for she mendeth it.

27. Shall she not wear what she hath patched?

28. Catch me a woman asleep, and I will show thee a deaf, dumb, and blind one.

29. Beauty is woman's mask; shall she not varnish it to renew its brightness?

30. Children are good, but unseasonable in their comings and goings.

31. A man-child to a man, and a woman-child to a woman.

32. Promises mean two things: that which is promised, and that which the promiser meaneth.

33. Love is no dung-beetle, but a butterfly.

34. Many flowers must it sip to furnish itself with sweetness.

35. Doth the butterfly tarnish its wings, roaming from flower to flower?

36. Deceit comes natural to a woman.

37. But she don't mean any harm by it.

38. Dress is the law of adornment, and hath no limits save æsthetic ones.

39. Purses are made of Caoutchouc: the more you tug at them, the longer they get.

40. To-day, woman sees her mission, and embraces it.

41. She never saw it before.

42. For woman's mission is not to make soup on Mondays.

43. For man's business is to make money.

44. And it is woman's mission to spend it.

45. And the Apites Cash and Shoddash are her servants.

46. And she despiseth the Apite Demagosh.

47. But the Apite Bosh, he is her lord and her master!

48. Man is man, and woman is woman.

49. Man is not woman, but woman is man.

50. Only more so.

51. For the two-edged sword is in her hand, but man cannot restrain himself from falling on it.

52. And the wealth of wisdom is stored in her soul, but she hath no need to make use of it.

53. For a smile helpeth her more than great logic, and a soft word melteth mountains of ice.

54. Her hatred is sharper than needles, but her love is more cunning than the cunning of foxes.

55. And this is the philosophy of the Double-Breasted, saith the Little Prophet.

56. Blessed be woman, I say, yea, blessed even in all the circumference of her garments!

57. And grant me a safe deliverance from her toils, and an insurance against her plottings!

58. Yea verily!

XIX.

SHEKINAH!

1. Moreover, sister-brother Petra Lucida, sitting there upon his-her tripod in his-her court of Thesmophoria, in the city of Peoria, did inculcate the Little Prophet in the deep doctrine of PLUS and MINUS, which is a branch of the Philosophy of the Double-Breasted.

2. And he-she opened her-his mouth, and spoke as follows:

3. Verily, the Yea of it, and the Nay of it!

4. The Law of Accordance and the Law of Discordance.

5. The Laws of the Continuous Movement of all Spiritual Atems.

6. For Sphere draweth unto Sphere, and Sphere repelleth from Sphere, and there is always attraction, and repugnance, and harmony, and strife.

7. And the South Wind kisseth the sea, but the North Wind buffeteth it strenuously.

8. And blood mingleth with blood.

9. And diverse airs swell the lungs of the new-born child.

10. Thy sense is but the outward ungainly husk of thee, coarse, vain, false, and hypocritical.

11. But thy spirit is true, and pure, and gracious, a fitting guide, and a courteous pilot unto thee.

12. Therefore, follow thy spirit, not thy sense.

13. For the outer man resists the inner.

14. Let the bison bellow, let the wolf howl, but heed thou only the cooing of the dove.

15. And convention, and social form, and every day observance, these are but the vortices of thy sense.

16. Cast off these, therefore, and luxuriate in the divine warmth of the spirit.

17. I saw a snail following its shiny track along a wall; and its mate called it from afar off.

18. And lo! it did prick up its horns, and obeyed the call, dancing for very joy!

19. Shall the vile snail obey the calls, and thou not obey them!

20. Verily I say to thee, Obey the promptings of the Spirit!

XX.

THE SMOKE OF THE GREAT CITY.

1. Now when the Little Prophet had heard the enunciation of this Philosophy, he was seized with a great fear lest some one should find an object in him.

2. Whereupon, he did borrow a broomstick of a woman of Peoria not yet inculcated in the Philosophy of the Double-Breasted.

3. And mounting upon it, soared into the air and fled thence by night with great precipitation.

4. And fleeing, he came finally within sight of the sea.

5. And descending came into the smoke of a great city.

6. And it was night, and no stars shone, and the air was thick and mirky.

7. And behold, the smoke of that city was tossed hither and thither by a perturbed swirl of blue ghosts.

8. And the ghosts had voices that they breathed out upon the night, voices wailing, complaining, grumbling, quarreling, despairing.

9. The voices of fever-slain babes; the voices of starved sewing women, strangled by the claws of the Afrite Shoddash.

10. And the voices cried woe! woe!

11. And other voices of men drowned in the stupor of madness mumbled forth, "some drink," "some drink," "some drink!"

12. But the misery, and woe, and desolation, and despair of the voices of the blue ghosts were unutterable.

13. And the Little Prophet, looking down upon the great city through the swirl of blue ghosts, beheld as it were a carnival, men feasting, and laughing, and dancing, and moving among all the booths of Vanity Fair;

14. But taking no heed to the continually augmenting swirl of blue ghosts.

15. So the Little Prophet lifted up his voice and cried out aloud, aloud,

16. Woe! woe! woe! to the Great City!

17. But the people thereof by no means hearkened to his cry.

ARMORED VESSELS.

LETTER FROM DONALD MC'KAY.

According to my promise I herewith furnish you with a few facts relating to the English and French iron-clad fleets, which I have recently inspected, and find many vessels completed which during previous visits were in process of construction, the names and particulars of which I gave you in former letters several years ago. I also saw several new iron-clads in progress, differing materially in construction and armor from the first. I am more convinced than ever that those iron-clad fleets fully meet my views as to efficiency and sea service, as stated in my previous communications to you.

While viewing these, their style of construction, equipment, &c., I felt proud that our Navy Department since 1861 have constructed, built, and equipped an iron-clad fleet, both for home defence and sea-going service, more powerful than all the iron-clad navies of the world; and I strongly recommend to the Government, as a profitable and judicious expenditure, and one which will prove to be the strongest guarantee of peace and just neutrality, a continuance of building and adding to our iron-clad sea-going fleet, thus keeping pace with other nations.

I can allude with pride to that wonderful production of human genius, the Dunderberg, now in process of construction by Mr. Wm. H. Webb, of New York. I have personally inspected all the iron-clads of England and France, but I have not seen one of them which, in originality of design, power and completeness of detail, begins to compare with her. She combines the impregnability o-

the turret system with the advantages of the broadsides and ends. In short, she can bring guns to bear from every point of the compass without changing her position. From the appearance of her model it is evident to me that she must be an excellent sea-boat, of superior speed, and, notwithstanding her great size, easily managed. It is said she will cost over two millions of dollars; but this is not high when compared with the sums lavished upon the large iron-clads of the Old World, which are far inferior to her as a vessel-of-war. I consider her a match for a fleet of such vessels as some of the best produced in France.

I am pleased to find that the Honorable Secretary in his report has recommended the enlargement of our navy yards, workshops, dry-docks, &c., also a building yard of proper size for the construction and fitting complete of the largest iron-clad ships, for the machinery and furnaces for forging and rolling plates equal in size and thickness to those used by the English Navy. In this way we could get the finest qualities of iron so essential for armored ships. A plate of the best quality of laminated iron, four inches thick, will protect a ship's side and resist solid shot equal to the common manufactured plates of six inches in thickness. This test was made in England. Large quantities of iron for both hull and armor, made by different contractors, which did not come up to the standard quality, I have seen condemned in England. I believe that the means and facilities for the manufacturing of iron plates and armor should be owned by and under the control of the Government.

Over forty large wooden screw-ships, without armor, are under construction now in the Government yards, and many are well advanced toward completion. The hulls were designed by Mr. John Lenthall, chief of the bureau of construction and repairs, on the Alabama principle for speed, and the motive power by Mr. B. F. Isherwood, chief of the bureau of steam engineering. Having inspected these ships and their machinery, I have no hesitation in saying they will be the fastest war ships in the world. The class carrying the two one-hundred inch cylinders will attain a regular sea-going speed upwards of fifteen knots.

With all that we have done and are doing in the increasing of our navy, I see, with our Honorable Secretary, one fearful deficiency, in basins or drydocks. Supposing that we had a hard naval engagement, resulting in the damaging of many vessels, we have only dry docks enough to repair a few ships, and for this reason we would at once become comparatively weak at sea, and this is a matter which should receive our early attention. France and England, while adding to the strength and number of their ships, keep pace with the increase of their dry docks and basins. Unless we adopt this system, the additions to our navy, so liberally appropriated for by Congress, will avail but little. The French dry docks contain space sufficient for fifty of the largest class ships at one time, and England is fast approaching this also.

On Mr. E. J. Reed's accession to the chief constructorship of the British navy, the Board of Admiralty authorized him to alter some of the small wooden ships (partially built, still on the stock), for armor-plating on a plan proposed by himself for new vessels of two thousand tons. The conversion of these into iron-clads by the new constructor was rather a difficult task, and should not be expected to equal new designs, yet they proved to be very successful sea-going ships. The Enterprise was the first taken in hand. She carries her armament and armor at somewhat less the contemplated draught (sixteen feet), and steaming only one-fourth of a knot less than other vessels of her class, carrying no armor at all. Her armor is four and a half inches thick, and extends over the whole length of the hull at the water line, and over a battery of four heavy guns, carried amidships. A year ago she was ordered on general service to the Mediterranean, and was the first British man-of-war that passed the Straits of Gibraltar with the new broadside, six and a half ton naval guns, firing one hundred pound round shot with twenty-five pounds of powder, having previously been pronounced by Admiral Sydney Dacres, the Commander-in-chief of the Channel squadron, after many sea trials the best iron-clad in the navy, as regarded sea-going qualities, accommodation, ventilation, &c.

The conversion of the Research followed the Enterprise, and differing from the latter chiefly in the fact that the upper deck was lowered in the former and the armor continued up to it, instead of the armor at the ends being a mere narrow belt. This would no doubt make the Research a stronger, more enduring ship in action, but it has made her a comparatively wet vessel in a sea way, although many officers of our own navy, who have had experience in our monitors, would perhaps consider her efficient when they learn that her upper deck is four and a half feet above the water at its lowest point; that the whole length of the deck is protected by bulwarks six feet high, and that in the central thirty-six feet of the ship's length she carries a fixed solid battery up to a height of eleven and a half feet, at which height it is decked over with sheet iron, covered with four-inch planking.

The Favorite, a ship of two thousand tons, and the Zealous, of nearly four thousand, were next taken in hand and converted by plans of the chief constructor, both being wooden ships and answering well so far as they have yet been tried, although in the case of the Zealous, as in the case of the French ships Magenta and Solferino, there is a large exposed portion of the wooden hull before and abaft the battery, which would no doubt be speedily set on fire in action. Still, there is no comparison between the offensive and defensive powers of these vessels as at present constructed, and what they would have been if completed on their original designs as mere unprotected wooden hulls.

A great improvement over the first iron-clads was a plan of Rear Admiral R. S. Robinson, Comptroller of the British navy, in securing the rudder-head and steering apparatus from the direct impact of shot. The confidence which Admiral Robinson had in the soundness of the views of the new constructor led the Admiralty to call upon him to design two powerful frigates—Lord Warden and Lord Clyde—of a new class, and of four thousand tons. These ships are each pierced with gun-ports on the main deck from stem to stern, and are armor-plated throughout, the plates being carried up over a topgallant forecastle, to protect two guns firing ahead on the upper deck, in addition to others firing forward and aft on the main deck.

Unlike all the other armor-clad ships of the British navy, therefore, these two carry four powerful guns, firing ahead in the line of their keel, which would no doubt render them most formidable examples of what is known in England as the "end-on" system. The armor of these ships is five and a half inches thick at the water line, and six inches (in two thicknesses of four and a half and one and a half inches) over the battery deck. These ships, however, being of wood and armed with a large number of guns, not of the largest class, did not fully represent the views of the chief constructor, and accordingly he handed in at the same time the design of another ship, to be built of iron and to carry a less number of very powerful guns, under the protection of armor of unusual thickness. This design was also adopted by the Admiralty, and the ship to be built called the Bellerophon—a name which has already become identified with the finest specimen of an iron-clad frigate yet produced in Great Britain.

So great was the simplification introduced into the design of the ship that she was floated out of dock within twelve months from the laying of the keel, with several hundreds of tons of armor already upon her sides, and in five or six months after she was taken down the Medway to the Nore, for a preliminary trial of her engines and screw, with her armor plating entirely completed, and many of her fittings well in hand. In addition to six inch armor, this ship is formed with a double iron skin, which has been found to add very much to the resisting power of her hull. She is armed with 12 ton guns, is to steam fourteen knots, and turns under the action of her balanced rudder, which is of the American plan, more handily than any other ship in the navy. Next the Pallas was commenced for the purpose of protecting British commerce from the American "Alabamas" and "Floridas." She was built of wood, at Woolwich, and is a short fast, handy ship, and like the Bellerophon, is full rigged for sea-going purposes. The armor plating is, of course, much inferior in strength to the Bellerophon, and her guns much fewer in number. The whole of these ships (Lord Clyde, Lord Warden, Bellerophon and Pallas) are rapidly approaching completion, and will speedily proceed on their sea trials.

Soon after the commencement of these ships Mr. E. J. Reid received his official appointment of chief constructor of the navy—he being at the time about thirty-three years of age—attaining this position solely by the merit of the plans submitted by him to the Admiralty, and highly approved by them. After his official appointment his first vessels were the two iron-clad gunboats, Viper and Vixen, which, being of a very light draught of water, afforded but little scope for obtaining superior qualities.

The water line and engines of these vessels are protected, but the only cover given to the guns is a transverse bulkhead, through which the guns fire over a forecastle deck. Each vessel is fitted with two screw propellers, sup-

ported by separate dead woods, so that the stern is double. The Viper is built wholly of iron, and the Vixen with iron frames and wood planking outside, to enable the bottom to be coppered.

The Penelope is also a double screw ship of iron, but of much larger dimensions, being nearly three thousand tons. Her armor will be similar to the Bellerophon's, but of less extent, and she is to draw but sixteen feet of water. Her cabins are to accommodate an admiral and his staff, and she is intended for any part of the world. This ship is but just begun at the Pembroke dockyard, South Wales.

The Hercules will succeed the Bellerophon at Chatham, differing from her but little, except that her armor is to be of a more ponderous character. The outside armor plates are nine inches thick, then come twelve-inch teak logs, then a double iron skin one and a half inches thick, then ten-inch iron frames filled in solid with teak, then eighteen inches of teak logs; next to these, and supporting them, another iron skin three-quarters of an inch thick, this skin being finally supported by iron frames eight inches deep.

A target constructed in this manner has been fired at with the most powerful twelve-ton guns, with extreme charges of powder and steel projectiles, but even the first iron skin was not penetrated. It is thought that even the twenty-ton six-hundred-pounder gun will not penetrate it; but this is about to be tried.

A very powerful iron-clad, designed by Mr. Reed for the Sultan of Turkey, with the sanction of the British Government, to be named the Turkestan, completed the list of iron-clad ships designed by him during two and a half years that he has been associated with the Admiralty.

In addition to the iron-clads, however, a fleet of 1,000 of wooden ships, to steam thirteen knots and carry a couple of heavy and a couple of light guns, have been designed by the chief constructor and built by the Admiralty, the remarkable feature about them being that they are only about one half of the length of fleet wooden sloops now building by the United States Government.

These sloops known as the Amazon class, are single screw vessels; and in addition to them a small, double-screw vessel, named the Plover, of only 660 tons, and without armor, has been laid down at Deptford. A paddle steamer, called the Helicon, has also been built from plans of the constructor, and has given good results—steaming a knot an hour faster in smooth water than a similar ship constructed by private parties, and nearly a knot and a half faster in a sea way.

The latest work of the chief constructor of the British navy has been to design a fleet of iron transports for conveying troops. These will be noble ships, three hundred and sixty feet long, forty-nine broad, drawing twenty feet of water, and to steam fourteen knots, carry one thousand two hundred and fifty troops, women and children, and two hundred officers and seamen on board. These ships will cost about two hundred thousand pounds each, or one million pounds sterling for the five. They are building in private yards, and will be completed in the coming year.

MIDWINTER.

The speckled sky is dim with snow,
The light flakes falter and fall slow;
Athwart the hill-top, rapt and pale,
Silently drops a filmy veil;
The far-off mountain's misty form,
Is entering now a tent of storm;
And all the valley is shut in
By flickering curtains gray and thin.

But cheerily the chickadee
Singeth to me on fence and tree;
The snow sails round him, as he sings,
White as the down of angels' wings.

I watch the slow flakes, as they fall
On bank and brier and broken wall;
Over the orchard, waste and brown,
All noiselessly they settle down,
Tipping the apple-boughs, and each
Light quivering twig of plum and peach.

On turf and curb and bower-roof
The snow-storm spreads its ivory woof;
It paves with pearl the garden-walk;
And lovingly round tattered stalk
And shivering stem its magic weaves
A mantle fair as lily-leaves.

The hooded beehive, small and low,
Stands like a maiden in the snow;
And the old door-slab is half hid,
Under an alabaster lid.

All day it snows: the sheeted post
Gleams in the dimness like a ghost;
All day the blasted oak has stood
A muffled wizard of the wood;
Garland and airy cap adorn
The sumach and the way-side thorn,
And clustering spangles lodge and shine
In the dark tresses of the pine.

The ragged bramble, dwarfed and old,
Shrinks like a beggar in the cold;
In surplice white the cedar stands,
And blesses him with priestly hands.

Still cheerily the chickadee
Singeth to me on fence and tree:
But in my inmost ear is heard
The music of a holier bird;
And heavenly thoughts, as soft and white
As snow-flakes, on my soul alight,
Clothing with love my lonely heart,
Healing with peace each bruised part,
Till all my being seems to be
Transfigured by their purity.

R. W. EMERSON.

(*From Once a Week.*)

THE PHANTOM SHIP.

Her Majesty's ship Spitfire (six-and-thirty guns) had been now four months on the southern coast of Africa, looking out for slavers as keenly as any terrier watching a rabbit-hole when the ferret has been put in.

This smart vessel's favorite anchorage was in Elephant Bay, Benguela, an inlet of the Atlantic, lat. 13 deg. S., long. 12 deg. 55 min. E., the highest land in all the Benguela coast, being a hill commanding the bay on the south side, which Captain Willoughby had found very useful for the purpose of a look-out.

Captain Willoughby was a little fragile man, with a long thin face, and only one eye. He had seen a great deal of service, and lost an arm at Acre; he was as brave as a lion, totally insensible to any such mean sensation as fear, and a stern disciplinarian, heeding no danger or risk he would have done the shot and shell of the enemy, and hating all grumblers at climate or any other hardship.

The dull monotony of African service, the mere daily routine of plank-robbing, rope-splicing, and sail-mending, was broken into on a warm September morning of 1860 by the arrival of H. M.'s brig Racoon, with despatches from Sierra Leone. The captain of the Racoon had been invited to lunch by Captain Willoughby, and H. M. S. Spitfire was in an unusual state of bustle with the preparations for that meal.

Abernethy, the grave old Scotch steward, was arranging some silver-topped bottles of champagne in a fan shape, round a small tank attached to a refrigerator, and even that was all but tepid with the heat of Africa. At the foot of the cabin-stairs three young midshipmen, one of whom, named Powis, was the "Pickle" of the vessel, stood watching him from above with eyes sparkling with fun and mischief. The under-steward and his boys were every moment descending the steps with piles of plates tucked under their chins. A distant savor of soup spread from the distant galley, where red-faced beings in white stirred and sipped at simmering stew pans.

"Dobson," said the head steward, under breath, "just watch this wine while I go and get up some more coffee biscuits. The captain's boat will be here directly. Keep your weather eye open, Dobson; there's that Mr. Powis there, as full of mischief as an egg full of meat."

"Ay, ay, Mr. Abernethy," said the under-steward, sitting down on the lower steps, a very Cerberus, with one foot planted on the great metal lined chest of the refrigerator; and as Abernethy plunged into the store-room, Powis and his companions ran up on deck.

Five minutes after there came a violent shout of "Dobson! Dobson!" from the direction of the store-room, and Dobson, forgetting for the moment his charge, ran to see who it was called him.

Three minutes afterwards there was a running together of sailors amid ships to the gangways, a shout below, a sound of voices, and the next moment Captain Willoughby and his guest, Captain Martlock, a stiff, precise old officer, followed by several officers of both vessels, followed each other, one after the other, over the ship's side. A guard of marines, drawn up in military order, received them with presented arms. The midshipmen, headed by Powis, the eldest of the lot, were there in full uniform, to do honor to so unusual an occasion.

"Hang it!" cried Powis, as the procession passed down into the state cabin; "old Cyclops" (the midshipmen's nickname for their excellent captain) "might have asked us to meet these Racoon fellows. One does deserve a better dinner sometimes than salt junk and bolster-pudding for serving one's country in this infernal climate. What have they come about, Gasket?" turning to an old quartermaster, a rough old sailor, with enormous bushes of grey whiskers.

"Come, Mr. Powis, 'bout captain going up country to make presents, and hold a palavar with the niggers to induce 'em not to sell 'em selves to those cussed Portuguese."

(Continued on page 122.)

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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1866.

The new issue of the Saturday Press in its enlarged and improved form will be ready this day week. The subscription will be raised from three dollars a year to five: single numbers ten cents. The reasons for this advance are too obvious to require explanation.

We take this opportunity to thank our friends (some of whom we have never seen) for the lists of subscribers they have already sent in for the new issue, and to suggest to our readers generally that they cannot do better than volunteer in the same cause.

Persons who desire to canvass regularly for the paper are informed that they will be allowed a commission of twenty per cent. on all remittances.

News-agents will please send their orders to the American News Company: orders for an extra supply of the first number should be forwarded immediately.

Advertisements, excepting such as are changed every week, should be sent in, if any special place is desired, on or before Tuesday next.

A WORD TO PRESIDENT JOHNSON.

As a cat may look upon a king, we suppose an editor may speak to a president. Well, then, Mr. Johnson, please stick to your post, and speak us no more speeches. Your veto-message is the soundest political document that has appeared since the Declaration of Independence. Stand by that, then, as your platform, and instead of making speeches, execute laws. Congress talks enough for the whole country; the demand, now, is for action. Don't try to silence your opponents by answering them, for you might as well try to silence a brass kettle by beating it.

We have been requested, this last month, to sign about a dozen petitions to Congress: the only one we could think of signing would be to the effect that that loquacious body would either stop talking and go to work, or else "get up and git." If this country is ever ruined, it will be by what Carlyle calls Spouting Wretches.

The arrangements being made by our city authorities for the reception of the cholera re growing more and more perfect every day. It will have the "freedom of the city" extended to it immediately on its arrival. Two or three rather dismal branches of industry are getting ready for the emergency, and mahogany has gone up nearly twenty per cent.

At a bigamy suit recently instituted against a young woman in England, it turned out that one of her husbands was named Little and the other Long. One of our funny contributors, on hearing of the case, said he could imagine the woman addressing her brace of husbands thus: "Love me, Little—love me, Long."

The question "how to relieve Broadway," which has been fruitlessly discussed among us for so many years, is now about to be solved by the Broadway landlords. They propose to raise the rents on the great thoroughfare to such a figure that all their tenants will be forced to move to some other locality.

A correspondent, who seems to take a patriotic interest in internal-revenue affairs, suggests that as we have a nincome tax we should also have a noodle tax. He thinks that if the two were rigidly enforced, the national debt would be extinguished in less than a year.

The Rev. Mr. Bayley who delivered a lecture in town the other night in defence of tobacco proposes to repeat it. We suggest that cigars be passed round among the audience and that the reverend lecturer himself set the example of smoking during the performance.

Since the recent attacks upon Mr. A. T. Stewart which have appeared in sundry city and country papers, that gentleman is said to have gone into the dry-goods business more extensively than ever.

Talk of "A Night in a Workhouse," says one of our correspondents, "anybody who was at the Academy of Music last Saturday, might have written a far more harrowing description of 'A Night in a Play House.'"

It is reported that President Johnson having written to Fernando Wood to consult him about his policy, Fernando replied that he was not in the policy business any more, and referred the matter to his brother Ben.

It is proposed to change the name of the House of Representatives in Washington to "The Stevens House." The landlord of the hotel in this city bearing that name indignantly objects. We don't wonder.

We hear that a new Mutual Admiration Society is about to be formed in Boston under the title of "The Good Felloes of the Hub." The presidency is said to have been offered to Mr Longfelloe.

"They say that absinthe conquers love," and it is probably for this reason that a number of young ladies in Paris have recently formed themselves into a society to discourage its use.

Mr. George Wood has taken a long lease of Wallack's Old Theatre (now the Broadway) so that instead of being pulled down it is about to be built up.

The Cumberland Coal Company are expecting a rapid rise in their stock on account of a contract they have recently made for the exclusive supply of the Fenian navy.

The Height of Impudence.—A parcel of counterfeit legislators in Albany undertaking to make laws and regulations for New York city.

Our pet brigadier has thrown aside his shoulder straps and gone to farming. He says "his occupation's corn."

Poor but Ornate.—Bancroft's Eulogy of Lincoln.

Good wine needs no push.

Congress Water.—Rum.

DRAMATIC FEUILLETON.

BY FIGARO.

If there is another Matinée given at Wood's Theatre, Mr. Editor, during the run of "The Child-Stealer" there, I shall move that Manager Wood be arrested for cruelty to actors.

Moreover, if the piece is not immediately cut down and brought within reasonable acting time, I shall have Gayler arrested for cruelty to audiences.

"Never too late to mend" is a good axiom enough—so at least my friend Crispino says—but when you come to "Never too late to end," and insist on playing a piece till the hard-hearted old clock threatens to strike its little ones, you forget that "life is short," and that "art" is getting to be a deuced sight too "long."

And here, Sir, all my objections to "The Child Stealer" stop.

It is an admirable drama of its kind, and when it comes to be trimmed down a little, I shouldn't be surprised if it had a run here as it had in Paris, of three or four hundred nights.

People who object to everything on the stage except pure tragedy or comedy, will of course find fault with it: and when we have nothing in real life except pure tragedy or comedy—in other words when human nature comes to be "reconstructed"—they will probably have a stage conducted according to their own views and a new and improved species of human being on hand to keep it in countenance.

Excuse me if I am a little snappish, Mr. Editor; but when I see throngs of people moved to tears night after night by a play like "The Child-Stealer," and then hear it said that the thing is "illegitimate"—that it is too "sensational"—that, in substance, people ought *not* to be moved by it, or by anything else except according to certain prescribed rules—I lose all patience.

The incidents upon which "The Child Stealer" is based, are perfectly simple—the plot is clean within the limits of probability—the characters are thoroughly human—and though the picture presented is one of low life, it is nevertheless a palpably true picture, and one which the dramatist has handled not perhaps with overmuch delicacy, but certainly with great skill.

I sent you a sketch of the plot last week.

The leading character—Madge the Cadger—is played by Miss Lucille Western, and played with very great power.

I can remember no piece of characterization in that line, so perfect: it is better—far better in my opinion—than Charlotte Cushman's Nancy Sykes.

Not only in the outline, but in all the niceties of light and shade, it is a most finished and artistic performance.

So also is Mr. Barton Hill's Richard Craddock—though the character is not nearly so difficult a one to delineate.

Of the minor characters, the only ones that attract special attention are Jemmy Jubbs, played by Mr. G. C. Davenport, and Simon Niphem, played by Mr. M. W. Leffingwell; Mr. Davenport, in particular, was admirable.

The play is not very brilliantly mounted, but it runs on very smoothly for all that, and will long be remembered by those who have seen it, as presenting one of those rare stage-portraits which mark an epoch in the history of a theatre.

So you see, my dear fellow, that though I couldn't pay homage to Miss Western as Lady Isabel, I take off my hat to her as Madge the Cadger, and with my usual modesty, insist that you shall do the same.

And I should like, now, to take off my hat to another lady, and that no other than Miss Lacoste, who made her début last Saturday night at the Academy of Music in Mr. Pray's translation, adaptation, or whatever of "Virginia."

But, alas! I cannot do it.

The young lady has a fine personal presence, a delicious voice, a most lady-like manner, and many other charming qualities; but, so far as I can see, no special aptitude for the stage.

Still, there is no telling what study and perseverance may do: and moreover if Miss Lacoste gets a chance to appear in some other place, and with a company composed of something besides sticks, she may develop talents which were imperceptible the other night on account of being hidden under the Academic bushel.

The best thing to be said about her first performance is that she was letter-perfect in her part; that she evidently knew the meaning of the words (a rare occurrence even with "stars"); that she showed no tendency to rant; and that in some of the impassioned scenes she overcame the bombast of the language and gave us a touch or two of genuine womanly pathos.

If I had any advice to give to Miss Lacoste it would be that she make a special study of the natural school of acting, as distinguished from the traditional—that she discontinue all lessons in elocution—and that before playing again she go to some tragedy theatre as often as possible to learn "how not to do it."

Meanwhile, if she, or any one, wants to see the natural school of acting run into the ground—so that its dangers as well as its charms are exposed—and one almost longs for the "Old Park" days again—it will be only necessary to go to Niblo's and see Maggie Mitchell in Fanchon.

I went myself, the other night, and when one of my æsthetic friends asked me if I wished the stage to come to that, I was obliged to own that from his point of view he "had me."

However, little Maggie is very fascinating, with all her faults, and people rush to see her as a relief from the stilted formalities of the old school.

Why don't actors take a lesson from this and give us, now and then, a bit of simple, unaffected acting?

Does anybody suppose that John Owens would have accumulated a fortune in New York playing the one part of Solon Shingle, if he had played it after the hard unnatural style which prevails in nearly all our theatres?

Never.

And, now, Mr. Editor, farewell till next week.

I have not seen the new play at Wallack's ("Society") nor "Israel in Egypt" at Barnum's—and as these are the only novelties of the week except "The Child Stealer" at Wood's—I find myself suddenly brought to a full stop.

Besides I am thinking so much of your "new issue"—and of my promise to help make it the most sprightly paper in town—that nearly everything else is driven out of my mind.

You shall have all you want about "Society," and about "Israel," when I write again; and also about Mrs. Wood's "Cinderella e la Comare," which I see she is to bring out next Monday with the new actor Mr. Geo. Fawcett Rowe, who will also play Sir Charles Coldstream in "Used Up."

E. L. Davenport retires from Mrs. Wood's to-night, and takes his benefit in "Who Killed Cock Robin" and "Wild Oats."

Don't forget, by the way, that on Monday next that sterling old actor, John Gilbert, takes his benefit at Wallack's, playing in "The Clandestine Marriage," which has not been on the boards before this season.

Of the other places of amusement, it is only to be said that Booth's Richelieu continues to be the rage at the Winter Garden, where it fills the house every night and every Wednesday afternoon with the élite of the city; that at the Broadway, John Owens will give another (and the last but one) of his famous Solon Shingle Matinées to-day; that at the operatic matinée to-day "Ione" is to be given (services to commence at 11 A. M.); that at the Academy in Brooklyn Miss Bateman gave her final performance last night, having taken the whole city captive with her matchless representation of "Leah;" and, lastly, that Matilda Heron is presently to play "Medea" at the New Broadway for the benefit of Mrs. W. J. Jones.

FIGARO.

P. S.—The Hanlons are doing a superb business at the Continental in Boston, while Gayler's new piece, with which they appear, and in which Sylvester's "Magic Fountain" plays so conspicuous a part, seems to have set the old Hub a spinning. Alfred Hanlon has made a great hit with a new series of feats called "Aeropateticisms."

DeWalden's "Sam," with Frank Chanfrau, Olive Logan, Charley Parsloe, and the author in the cast (Frank, of course, being at the top of the heap) is making such a success in Philadelphia that hundreds of persons are turned away nightly from the house.

The March number of the ATLANTIC MONTHLY contains, among other articles, a continuation of the "Passages from Hawthorne's Note-book;" "An Old Man's Idyl," by Richard Realf; the second and concluding part of "The Freedman's Story," by William Parker (a colored author); an article on "Nantucket," (the land of the free and the home of H. C. Jr.) by F. Sheldon; "The Snow-Walkers," by John Burroughs; "An Amazonian Pic-nic," by Mrs. Agassiz; the continuation of "Doctor Johns," by Donald G. Mitchell; "Communication with the Pacific," by O. C. Cesia; part third of the "Chimney Corner for 1868," by Mrs. H. B. Stowe; "Poor Chloe," by Lydia Maria Child; a poem by T. B. Aldrich, entitled "Snow;" and the fourth number of "Griffith Gaunt or Jealousy," by Charles Reade.

We are pleased to learn that the business of our great news-dealer, BRENTANO, has increased to such an extent as to make it necessary for him to have a branch establishment. He is now looking out for a place somewhere on the West side of Broadway.

LINES

KIMPOSED A BORED OF A CALIFORNY MALE STEEMER.

BY H. H. BROWNELL.

Wal! of all the cussed kinveyances,
  Ef this isn't about the wust!
Nothin but rockin and rollin
  An pitchin, from the verry fust—
The ingine a groanin, and the biler
  Lyable enny minnit to bust.

Fust wun side, dum it, and then tuther?
  Till Ime dogged ef I no wot to du—
Rock away, yu darned old kradle!
  I *was* a baby wen I got inter *you*!

None on em seems to keer 6¼ cents
  How bad a feller may feel,
Nur to talk to him—not even the saler
  Foolin away his time on a wheel.

Thar's the capting! aint it provokin
  To see that critter, all threw the trip,
Continoually drinkin and smokin,
  Wen he orter be a mindin on his ship.

It's enuf to aggervait a body,
  And it aint manners, I think,
To set thar takin down his toddy,
  And never askin nary parsinger to drink.

And the pusser, all he keers fur,
  Is fur to hev a time with his pals.
I say, darn seech a pusser! jest heer him
  Flurtin and carrin on among the gals!

And wen he's tired o' that, wot follers?
  In his litle cabbing thar he sets
Like a spyder, among berrils o' dollers—
  Enuf to pay a feller's dets.

That's all *they* keers for parsingers,
  Is, to git the two-hunder-
'N-fifty-dolers out of his pockit inter theirn,
  And then he may go to thunder.

Ef a feller's driv to distraxion
  In a blo, and axes wot to du,
He cant git no sort o' sattisfaxion
  Out o' none on em—capting, mait, nur crew.

Wun day I clim inter their blamed riggin,
  Jest to see wot thar wos, and in hopes
To kepe shet of em wun spell—but dog it!
  I see 2 on em comin up the ropes.

Wun on em ketched me and hilt hold on me,
  While tother misrable cuss
Tide me up with a nasty, sticky cloze-line,
  Smellin o' tar or sumthin wuss.

Thar they kep me—darn their picturs!
  And nobody done nothin but larf,
Till I'd forkt out fur a bottle o' brandy—
  It come to $2½.

That's the last $2½
  They'll ever git out o' me,
Fur Ile travvil in a durned top-waggin,
  Afore Ile be ketched agin to sea.

"Wish I'd a nigger, Gasket, to keep watch, and soak my junk for me."

"And go to the mast-head for you, Master Powis?"

"Well," said the curly-headed youngster, "shouldn't mind that either, and he should do my work, too, on the look-out hill."

"Seen the Phantom Ship last night, Gasket?" said Powis's companion, with a wink at Powis; for Gasket, though one of the best sailors on board, was very superstitious, and had lately spread among the men a report of a white ghostly sort of vessel that he had seen three nights running at two bells, steal out of the bay, but which was generally supposed to be a creation of his own brain, and a mere drift of that thick smouldering fog that after nightfall hid the shore of the bay. This Phantom Ship seen in a bay guarded by one of the smartest of her Majesty's cruisers, had become a stock joke against the the quartermaster, and he was rather sore on the subject, so all the reply he gave was to roll his quid, make a sour grimace, matter something about "a young shaver as did'nt know a Blackwall hitch from a Carrick bend," and turn on his heels as he helped to haul in the captain's boat up to the davits.

"Half a dozen lads such as that ain't worth their weight in dunnage," he muttered, as the midshipmen went off langhing. "What use are school boys on board ship, except to sauce the captain behind his back, and play monkey tricks on the stewards? Ugh!" and he hit one of the ship's boys a clout for not being quick enough with the marlinspike that the sail-maker was calling for.

In the meantime lunch (an early dinner in reality) had commenced in the cabin. The Racoon and Spitfire officers having finished their soup were taking wine together, and exchanging grumbles on the climate, and discussions on the chance of preferment. Captain Martlock was a worthy man, but rather stiff-starched, precise, taciturn, soured, and with a somewhat overweening sense of his own importance. His host, one of those frank, generous natures, slow to take offence, did not, however, regard the punctilios of his guest.

"I hope the dispatches of which I am the bearer," said Martlock to his host, bowing stifly (as if it hurt him) as he spoke, "contained no unpleasant news?"

"Well," said the officer he addressed, "neither pleasant nor unpleasant. I never stop to think whether duty is agreeable or otherwise. Perhaps if I had my choice I should not have selected this."

"And may I ask in what it consists?" (another stiff bow).

"It is no secret, Captain Martlock. I have to start the first thing to-morrow for a two days' journey from this Elephant Bay we are now in up into the Goribah country, with beads and looking-glasses as presents for the king of the Loluna tribes, to induce him to withhold his supply of slaves to the Portuguese cruisers that visit this inlet."

"Have you seen any slavers, sir?" inquired Captain Martlock, warming over his wine.

"Not a ghost of one, Captain Martlock."

"Yes, we have seen the ghost of one," said the first lieutenant, who was a wit.

"True," said Captain Willoughby, "our quartermaster, a good sailor, but as full of old women's fancies as ever came through the dock gates, did tell us, a week ago, that he saw a sort of a phantom vessel; but no one believed him."

"Take my word for it, captain," said a little, stout, jovial man, the Spitfire's doctor, "Gasket will be down with typhus before three days are over; this sort of delusion is one of the first symptoms of this infernal African fever."

"I hope not doctor, I hope not; Gasket is a useful man to us."

"There is something about this slaver service," said Captain Martlock, as if he were preaching, "that tends, I think, to excite the imagination of the lowest order of our seamen; the monotony, the anxiety, the danger of disease, all, perhaps, contribute to this undesirable result."

"Oh, sailors are always full of that sort of nonsense," said Captain Willoughby, steering away from a discussion evidently meditated by his visitor. "Captain Martlock, may I have the pleasure of taking wine with you?"

Martlock bowed stifly, and muttered, "Pleasure!"

"Steward, the still champagne to Captain Martlock."

Off went the wire; up went the large-headed cork, but not noisy, and up rose the wine in the two glasses. The two captains raised their glasses simultaneously to their lips, bowed, and tossed off the contents. At the same moment their faces reddened, their cheeks dilated, as they spluttered, swore, and rose upon their feet.

"Why, what the ——, Abernethy, do you give us salt water when we ask for champagne? Who the dickens has played us this scurvy trick? By George, sir, I'll keel-haul him. Yes, I'll break him, sir."

"I should flog him," said Martlock, swelling with rage till he got as red as a turkey-cock. "I sh—sh—should put him in irons."

"I'll stake my life, captain," said the surprised and horrified Scotch steward, "that it's that Mr. Jekyll" (one of the midshipmen); "for one of the ship's boys saw him with a bottle in his hand near my pantry."

A strong disposition to laugh was visible on every face. The doctor coughed, the two first lieutenants blew their noses. The two captains fumed. Willoughby buttoned his coat angrily together. Martlock looked fiercely at everybody.

"Boy," said Willoughby, to one of the steward's assistants, "go on deck, and send Mr. Jekyll to me directly. By George, sir, I'll break him." This was the captain's most tremendous threat. "Why the deuce does not Mr. Jekyll come?" he cried, a few minutes after, long before the unfortunate lad had had time to come even down the stairs.

"If it was in my ship," said Martlock, scowling at his own officers, by whom he was regarded with no very special affection, "I'd have had a court-martial on him before an hour was over?"

Captain Willoughby was about to fire up, and remark that he needed no advice with regard to the government of H. M. S. Spitfire, when the steward boy returned, preceded by Jekyll, and followed at a distance by that incurable Pickle, Powis, who gave him such a tremendous pinch as he entered the state-cabin, that it drew from him a sharp and irrelevant scream.

The little midshipman looked very troubled and dirty, and his blue jacket and cap were covered with dust and fluff. A more disreputable, disordered midshipman never presented himself to a punctilious, irate captain.

"Mr. Jekyll," said his superior officer, turning round in his chair so as to face him, "is this a state for a midshipman of her Majesty's navy? What have you been doing, sir?"

"If you please, sir, I've been down in the hold, catching cockroaches."

There was a roar of laughter at the simplicity of the answer.

"If you please, sir, we make pots of them."

There was another roar at this.

"Mr. Jekyll, I'm in no humor for fooling. I want a plain answer to a plain question. Was it you who emptied the wine out of this champagne bottle and put in salt water? Was it you, sir?"

The lad colored, looked down, twirled his cap, stammered, and was silent.

At that instant Powis burst forward.

"And who sent for you?" roared the Captain. "How dare you, sir, enter this cabin without being sent for? Sir, if I break every midshipman in this ship, I will preserve proper discipline."

Powis was a fine, manly lad of seventeen, and as he stood there, with arm, unflinching eye, and cheek flushed, he looked a very model of English youth.

"If you please, sir, I only came to say it was I who put the salt water in the bottle, and not Jekyll. I did not do it for the wine, sir, I threw that away; it was only for a joke."

"Only a joke! And how dare you, sir, play jokes on your superior officers? Go up to the masthead this moment, sir."

"Yes, sir." And up went the lad, as nimble as a cat and as full of mischief as a kitten.

Captain Martlock had left the vessel, with his own private opinions about the discipline of the Spitfire; and Captain Willoughby, the first lieutenant, and the doctor, were closeted in the captain's private cabin over their coffee.

"Only to think of having to leave a ship of thirty-six guns in the care of such a born Pickle as that lad, Powis!" groaned the Captain, as he meditatively poured some brandy into his coffee cup. "By George, sir, I shan't have a moment's sleep till I set my foot once more on my own quarter-deck. That boy is the greatest monkey I ever shipped. By George, sir, if he hadn't come forward in such a manly way to-day to save Jekyll, I'd have broken him."

"He certainly is a Pilgarlic," said the first lieutenant; "but I think when there was duty to do he'd do it. Duty soon makes a man of a boy, if anything will. I was just such another lad, till I was made captain of a French prize, and had to take her back into St. Helena. I was a man from that day."

"O, but there's good in the boy," said the doctor. "He's brave and generous; there's no vice in him, it's only mischief."

"Only mischief! He's the greatest scapegrace I ever had on board."

"Then let me stop on board," said the lieutenant. "Allow me to look at the wording of the dispatch; there must surely be some loop-hole."

The captain took up the dispatch, and read it under breath.

"No," he said, "here is this devil of a

clause. "You are requested to take all your officers with you, so as to preserve a dignity that may aid your negotiation." No, we must all go. Well, I never did grumble at orders yet, but if I had ever done so, I might do so now. Doctor, mind you bring some quinine. There's safe to be a fever for one or two of us. By George, sir, on an African station one ought to live on quinine if one wishes to live at all."

The lieutenant and doctor took their leave of the captain, who wished to study his maps and prepare for the journey.

As the doctor was pacing the deck, and had arrived just under the mainmast, he gave a look upward to see if the offender was there. Yes, there he was, swinging his legs, fifty feet up, happy as a bird. As the doctor was still straining his head to observe him, there fell upon his face a shower of little white paper pellets, dropped with excellent aim by "Pickle Powis," as he was generally called, and with them came down in a shrill voice the mocking words, "To be taken night and morning."

The doctor was very angry: he tossed his head.

"That boy will come to a bad end. If I were the captain I'd keep him on the mast all night—a good dose of fever would tame him a bit; and, egad! I would not bring him round a day too soon."

But the doctor was angry. If Powis had really been ill he would have nursed him as tenderly as a woman.

Half an hour after the doctor had retired to his cabin for a nap, there was a gabbling of voices and a splash of oars round the bows.

"There come those spies of niggers," said Gasket, as he looked over the ship's side. "Hang their yams, and cocoa-nuts, and bananas! All they want, I know, is news of us to signal to the slavers. If I was the captain I'd never let a nigger set foot on the deck."

Up scrambled two stalwart negroes with nets on their backs, full of fruit. In a moment a fair was established at the foot of the mast. The negroes, eager for news and money jabbering in broken English; the sailors, eager for fruit and vegetables, trying to learn the best way to the Gorubah country.

In the middle of the discussion, down came a half-crown, wrapped in paper, at the feet of one of the negroes. It was marked, "Four bananas and a yam, twopence; give the change to Jekyll."

It was a message from Powis. A tall negro, thinking himself unobserved slipped the bit of silver into his waistband. In a moment, however, Jekyll had him by the wrist.

"Avast there!" he said; "fair play's a jewel. Let me read what Powis says."

The negro refused to give up the money, and assumed a vociferously injured air.

A scuffle commenced; in the middle of the scuffle appeared the first lieutenant.

"Here, no trouble with these niggers," he said. "If they choose to steal over with them, lads; bundle them out, fruit and all."

The thing was soon done. Jekyll and a sailor wrenched the half-crown from the negro, the other sailors pushed the blacks down the ship's side, and tossed the unsold fruit into the canoe after them. Jekyll secured the four bananas and yam for his friend Powis, and threw the twopence into the canoe of the enraged blacks, who, shouting and threatening, paddled off to the shore.

"Here's a pretty rig," said one of the men, when Powis had descended from the masthead, to become in a few hours after deputy-captain; "it used to be the high that were brought low, but now it's the low who rise high."

An hour after, the look-out man came back from Elephant Hill and reported a piratical-looking schooner as passing the next headland at noon. She had then stood out for sea, and was hull down at sunset.

"Piratical schooner be hung! was the captain's reply. "They take every little coaster for a slaver. Slavers don't run into the lion's den. Bonny River's the place to trap slavers."

Powis received his command as coolly as if he had been expecting a vessel for years past. He promised little—the captain thought that a good sign, and so it was; but still he did not conceal from the boy his alarm and distrust.

"Powis," said he, "be a good lad and take care of the ship, or by George, sir, I'll break you! When you want advice, ask the quartermaster; he's an old sailor, and knows all this coast as well as I know the Bill of Portland."

"I'd give my head," said the captain to the lieutenant, as Powis left the cabin, "to tell Gasket he is my mainstay if anything happens, but when there is divided command there is no discipline."

The day after the captain and his retinue left the vessel, the negro boat came paddling round the Spitfire as usual, but this time in a hostile and mocking way. The rowers waved their paddles or held up fruit. The negro whom Jekyll had detected thieving was especially prominent and vociferous, and, standing up in his canoe, kept pointing at Powis and passing his hand across his throat, as if threatening him.

"Let me give him a dose of sparrow shot," said Jekyll, "that'll warm him."

"No one must molest them," said Powis, gravely, and in quite an altered tone.

"How grand we are," said Jekyll, under breath, to another midshipman. "I thought it would be a lark when Powis was captain. I vote for going ashore." (These last words were said aloud.)

"We are short-handed," said Powis; "no one leaves the vessel, except on duty, till the captain's return. The negroes are not so friendly as they were. We musn't get into a scuffle with the natives."

"We used to call 'em niggers," said a pert little ship-boy, winking at Jekyll; "and after all, Gasket, they say, is the real captain."

Powis made no reply to this impertinence, but paced the deck thoughtfully.

There were only fourteen men left in the ship besides Powis and the two midshipmen.

"There will be no work now much," said one of the sailors to the carpenter.

"No; we're all captains now," replied the carpenter. There was a dangerous notion prevalent aboard the Spitfire that discipline was to be relaxed under "Pickle Powis."

As eight bells were struck (four o'clock in the morning,) the officer of the watch (Gasket) went as usual to the scuttle, knocked three times to call the watch, and called out, "All starbowlines, ahoy! eight bells. Do you hear the news there, you sleepers?"

Instead of the usual sprightly answer, "Ay, ay!" a voice answered, "Starbowlines be d——. Give us half an hour more snooze; there's no captain aboard now."

Another ten minutes elapsed; at the expiration of that time a stern, shrill, boy's voice hailed the sleepers. This time it was Powis's.

"Skulkers, ahoy! Do you hear the news, there, sleepers? and mind, ifyou do not turn out in five minutes, I report you to Captain Willoughby as mutineers. Quartermaster, go down. and take the name of the last man up."

This spirited reprimand was enough. In three minutes every man was on deck and at his duty.

An hour later, just at daybreak) Gasket suddenly came to Powis, as he was lying down for half an hour on the sofa in the captain's cabin, and begged him to come on deck instantly. There was something odd in the old sailor's manner. Powis was on deck in a moment.

"There it is, sir," said Gasket, pointing to the entrance of the bay; "if that is not a real ship, strike my name off the ship's books and sell me for a nigger."

Powis looked (he was all quiet alertness now, and grave as a statesman). There in the dull, curdling, grey daylight certainly was a long grey object stealing along close to the shore. Its sails were grey; its sides were bleached, colorless, and spectral. It certainly was ghostly enough. As they looked it slid round the corner of the headland, and disappeared from view.

Powis did not say much; he only remarked, "That is no phantom ship. We must look after that; but you were right after all, Gasket."

"I never seed such a change in a lad in twenty-four hours in all my life," was the quar master's reflection, as Powis retired to form his plans for foiling any scheme the crew on the phantom ship (as the sailors began to call it) might have formed.

The look-outs on Elephant Hill the next afternoon, made no signal—they had not seen any vessel; but as they were getting into their boat to come off to the vessel at sunset, a smoke had risen from a place in the bush, not fifty feet from the look-out. It was evidently a signal to some vessel waiting off the mouth of the bay.

The majority of the sailors were by this time deeply imbued with the belief that one vessel that had been seen was a spectre ship. They had collected in knots in the forecastle, and were discussing the legend of the Phantom Ship.

"It's no canny," said a Scotch sailor to the rest; "it bodes no gude to us, men, when auld Nickie-Ben leaves his sooty hatches and takes to yachting on the Africky coast."

Powis had just lit a lamp in the state cabin, and was poring over a chart of Elephant Bay, when in burst Jekyll, red with excitement, and his hair over his eyes; he carried a large musical box under his arm. It was chiming out after the prickly, nervous manner of its species, "Corn rigs are bonny."

"Look here, Powis, old Cyclops left his musical snuff-box on the table in his cabin. Come along, and let's have a cheroot and some grog together, and I'll wind it up all fresh. But how serious you look! Do you feel ill?"

Powis did not reply for a moment; when he did so, he spoke in a low, firm voice, with

every word articulated in a peculiarly keen manner.

"Jekyll," he said, "this is no time for sky-larking. There is work for us to do that may lead us to promotion, or a hole in the sand, before twenty-four hours. We must have no boyish tricks now. Go and tell Gasket I want him."

There was something not to be gainsayed in Powis's manner; so Jekyll put down the box, much as if it were red-hot, and hurrying on deck returned in a moment with Gasket.

"If you please, Mr. Powis," said Gasket, scraping the floor with one foot, "I think it would do you good not to take the watch to-night. "You'll be knocking yourself up; indeed, you will, sir. Take my advice, and keep to your hammock to-night. I can do all there is to do."

"Gasket," said the boy-captain, firmly but not harshly, "I am in command of this vessel, not you. The men shall take their orders from me, and from me alone. All we require of you is to set a good example to the men! and do your duty as quartermaster."

"As I hope to do," said the astonished sailor; "as I hope to do, Mr. Powis; but, knowing as young gentlemen is——"

"My age, Gasket, is no concern to any one. ou take your orders from me, and me only; mind, I'll have no interference. You were not left behind as my nurse. Let a good look-out be kept; put a third man on duty in the cross-trees, and never let him take his eyes off Elephant Hill. If the phantom ship is a slaver, and made of real plank, and not moonshine and fog, we'll have a snap at her as sure as there's rum in Jamaica. She puts into some bight of land that we must find out, and if she lands her crew to-night, to bring slaves from some baracoon that we have not yet found out, I think we may get the landing-net under her."

"What, with fourteen men?" muttered Jekyll. "Oh, he's mad! Why, it's the rat chasing the terrier."

But Powis had not heard him; he was again absorbed in his chart.

That night, by Powis's orders, all lights were put out in the ship at a very early hour. He wished to give the slaver, if such the phantom vessel was, a notion that loose watch was kept on board the Spitfire.

That whole night, with only now and then a short rest in the cabin, the boy-captain remained himself in the cross-trees, as vigilant as a deer-stalker. Gasket was by his side, equally intent on the harbor mouth.

All of a sudden Gasket felt his arm clutched, and he looked round.

For one moment a little tongue of fire had risen from the apex of the look-out hill, the seaward side, and then disappeared.

It was momentary as the gleam of a shooting-star. Ten minutes afterwards the same ghostly vessel, seen by a moment's moonlight, stole round the headland, but this time its progress was inward and not outward.

"It's an out-and-in-wind; just what they want," whispered Gasket; "they have sweeps, too, for I can see them—now they are hidden again; if it was a clear night they daren't risk it."

"Take the night-glass," cried Powis; "keep it turned on the third bight from the headland; if they pass that we lose them, if they stop there we have them, for they go there to land their men, and we'll have a snap at their vessel in their absence. Does she pass? Now, quick, before the cloud is over the moon again."

"She has not passed," cried Gasket; "she has steered up some lagoon not down in the chart. She must know of the captain's being ashore, and trusts to get her cargo in, while we are tied by the heels."

"Get up the anchor quietly," said Powis, with the bearing of a young admiral, "and steer straight for the second bight. Is there any landmark, Gasket?"

"Ay, ay, sir; a taft of palm-trees between two sand-hills."

In an incredibly short time the Spitfire was under sail, and availing herself of every glimpse of moonlight, and of every puff of the useful out-and-in-wind to reach the second bight, the hidden lagoon that concealed the mysterious vessel of which Powis was in pursuit.

"He is a fine lad, but it's all of no use," said Gasket to himself; "she'll bolt just as we get near, and before we can tack and get a gun ready, off she'll be, well out at sea, laughing at us, and as full of slaves as an egg's full of meat. Those Portuguese fellows are as quick and as cunning as monkeys."

Hitherto all had gone well. The Spitfire had come to the mouth of the second bight, and no enemy had yet appeared. Powis gave orders to arm the men and lower a boat. His object was to pull along the shore of the bight and search for the concealed lagoon.

The men, whose superstitious fears were still working, hesitated for a moment to leap into the boat. The Scotchman muttered something about "snares of the de'il;" the coxswain, more practical, said, "there was no captain, and they'd be overmatched," and "the quartermaster won't go."

"But I do go," shouted Gasket, leaping into his place, "and shame on all cowards! Why, lads, if we trap this slaver we're all made for life. Come, altogether; quietly, no shouting."

The men, ashamed of their fears, now took their places, muffled their oars, buckled on their cutlasses, and loaded their pistols. Four men only were left in charge of the ship. When a pistol was fired from the boat, they were to reply with a gun as a signal of attention.

The men pulled swiftly and silently into the bight, keeping as close as possible to the shadow of the jungle of gigantic reeds that covered the sides of the lagoon.

They did not dare yet to venture into the mid-channel to even obtain a glimpse of the further shores, where the phantom ship (if it were indeed manned by flesh and blood) might be lying.

The boy-captain, at the last clump of bush, cried "Ship your oars!" and there they lay crouched, peering through the boughs of the hugh poisonous-blossomed trees that trailed into the water.

It was by this time daybreak. Imagine the brave lad's rapture, on standing up in the boat and parting the boughs with his hands, to behold, not five hundred yards off, the phantom ship, a low-lying, rakish, Portuguese schooner, painted greyish white, the better to elude observation at night (grey being a peculiarly vanishing color.) It was at anchor. The only men visible were two or three negroes, leaning half-asleep, over the stern, fishing, and [illegible] with their backs turned towards the place where the Spitfire's boat lay hid.

Powis turned round, his face beaming with triumph, and in a cautious whisper communicated the glorious news to Gasket and the boat's crew.

Gasket was as brave as a lion, but he was unaccustomed to act on his own responsibility, and he dreaded the rashness of a midshipman. He coughed, looked hard at a special rowlock, rubbed it with his great horny fist, and muttered something about,—

"S'pose it's a hambuscade. What can we do agin forty or fifty Portuguese? and as for blacks, they can fire muskets as well as white men."

"Cha!" said Powis, speaking between his half-clenched teeth. "Do you think my brains are all leather, like yours? Don't I see that the rascals are gone ashore to bring slaves from the baracoon? There can be no one on board but a nigger and a sick man or two. I tell you, man, I'll go alone, and swim to it, if you are all cowards."

This fired the damp powder of the old sea-dog's spirit. There is a drop of Cain's cruel blood at the bottom of most men's hearts.

"Avast with your cowards!" he cried, pulling out his cutlass, and running his big thumb along the edge in a most business-like way. It was a bad omen for the slaver's men.

Powis's eyes glistened as he seized old Gasket's hand, and took off his own cap, and waved it. Then he and the men took out their pistols and looked to the locks, or tightened their belts, and slung round their cutlasses snugger for their hands.

The boy-captain's speech was spoken in a low but firm voice. "Men," he said, "we may be doing a safe thing, or we may be going to our death, for, even if we do get the slaver safe, our captain and comrades may not return in time to help us if the dogs dare to try and get her back. If we die, let us die like Englishmen, true to our God and our Queen; we must hold together back to back, and no flinchers. If we fail, they will at least say in England that we deserved to have succeeded. God be with us, and guide us to victory, for our cause is a good cause. Now then, men, give way with a will, and board her!"

"Pull straight for her, Spitfires!" cried Gasket, and out the boat flew from between the branches as if it was driven by steam.

The water was scarcely splashed by the oars. It seemed only an instant after that the boat lay alongside the phantom ship, and, headed by Powis, the boarders dashed like wild cats at the main chains, and sprang on deck with an English hurrah that was full of cheerful courage.

Three or four frightened negroes and an old Portuguese sprang to arms, but they were cut down or beaten down in a moment. One Spitfire was shot in the arm, but with the exception of that casualty, and a knife-cut on Powis's sword-wrist, the daring assailants suffered no hurt. The phantom ship was their own.

"Well done!" cried Powis, wrapping a handkerchief round his wrist. "The dog tried hard to get at my throat, but I gave him N

3, Gasket, and that'll last him for some time. See to him; he mustn't bleed to death. The ship's our own. Now get up the anchor, for we must move her off."

He fired his pistol, and the Spitfire answered with a gun, as agreed on.

"We haven't too much time," he said, "for directly the blackguards hear the row they'll be after us. Now, with a will, lads, and I'll take a capstan bar myself, for I've got my left hand all right still."

And they did work with a will. They found some slaves in the hold, and made them too help. In an incredibly short time the vessel's head was turned, and she and the Spitfire were working down the lagoon, towards the old mooring-place.

And now, in the lull of excitement, the boy's nature began to crop up again. Once more on board the Spitfire, and down in the cabin, he danced hornpipes and hugged Jekyll. Nor was Jekyll one whit less delighted.

"Only think, Jekyll, how pleased the governor and master will be to hear how we took the slaver."

"The dodgy old fellow," shouted Jekyll. "Allow me, gentlemen, to propose the health of Captain Powis of the Phantom Ship; that's about the style."

But the boy's talk was broken by the entrance of Gasket. He looked flurried, and rather pale with excitement.

"Mr. Powis," he said, "it's all up; here's the dirty blackguards of Portuguese on us as thick as thunder—boats full on 'em, sir, rampaging away like so many sore bears. You can see them poking their noses out of the bight there, as thick as bees at a swarming."

Powis was awake in a moment, and ready for the emergency. If there was not a Nelson, there was at least the making of a Collingwood in that "Pickle" of the vessel.

"We'll warm the dogs, Gasket," he said, leaping up, and calmly loading a revolver that lay on the table before him. "What we've contrived to get we'll contrive to keep. It can't be long before Captain Willoughby and our messmates return. Be quick, man, then, and give them a shell before the canoes spread out into the bay; we shall have them more in a lump now."

There was no time to lose. When Powis got on deck, five or six canoes, crammed with shouting negroes, mulattoes, and piratical looking Portuguese sailors in Panama hats, were rowing fiercely out of the tree-shadowed mouth of the lagoon, and pulling straight for the Spitfire.

"Give it them hot, don't throw away a shot!" cried Powis to the men at the guns. "Well thrown, but a little over them."

The next moment the second gun thundered out.

"Famous, by Jove" cried the boy-captain.

This time the shot ploughed into the second canoe, and shattered it into fragments. The leading canoes halted to assist the wounded and pick up the survivors.

The Spitfires gave a shout of triumph. The next moment the storm burst full upon them. The slavers rallied and bore down upon them in full force. From the first canoe a dozen rough, black-muzzled fellows dashed at the Spitfire's side and attempted to board her. Powis met them with pike and cutlass, and drove them back over the ship's gunwale after ten minutes' hand-to-hand fighting. Twice Gasket's cutlass saved the boy-captain's life. Three of the oldest hands, urged on by Jekyll, kept at work all the time with a central gun, to keep off the other miscreants.

It was hard work, and the men were all but spent, when a discharge of musketry arose into the air from the foot of Elephant Hill.

"God be thanked!" cried Powis, as he leant, faint and wounded, against a gun-carriage. "We are saved, boys. Give it them again! Blow the dogs out of the water! Now, all at once."

The pirates had fled, leaving one-third of their number dead in Elephant Bay. But Captain Willoughby had not arrived a moment too soon. Great was his astonishment and delight to discover that his "Pickle" of a midshipman had captured the famous phantom ship.

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And thanks untraced to lips unknown
Shall greet me like the odors blown
From unseen meadows newly mown,
Or lilies floating in some pond.
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